
C H A P T E R 1

Introduction

I. Context and Purpose

The Dulles South planning area covers approximately 25,100 acres, 39 square miles, in the southeastern part of Loudoun County (see Locational Map, Figure 1, page 3). The planning area is bisected by Route 50 and encompasses Washington Dulles International Airport. The planning area is bounded by Fairfax County to the east, and Bull Run and Prince William County to the south. It is defined to the north by the ridge forming the Upper Broad Run watershed and the property line of the approved Brambleton development project and to the west by the Upper Broad Run and Foley Branch subwatersheds which lie just east of Route 621 and Route 860. A plan for a small portion (approximately 1300 acres) of the Dulles South planning area, the Cub Run subwatershed, was adopted by the County in 1989. Although the Dulles South plan reflects the policies of the Cub Run Area Management Plan, the Cub Run plan remains in effect for that portion of the Dulles South planning area.

The Dulles South planning area is relatively undeveloped because the area is not served by central utilities and poor soils limit development using conventional wells and septic systems. More than 60 percent of the area is farmed or in pasture. Approximately 600-700 families live in Dulles South in a scattering of farms, houses on large lots and the three small villages of Arcola, Conklin, and Lenah. Although the villages of Lenah and Arcola include a variety of community and business uses, the majority of commercial and business uses in the planning area are located along Route 50. The planning area is also home to a number of industrial operations including two quarries: Chantilly Crushed Stone, on the southern perimeter of Washington Dulles International Airport, and Bull Run quarry in the southern tip of the planning area. A third quarry has been approved on Route 659, in the center of the planning area. Dulles South residents have a strong sense of place derived from the unique character of the land, their relationship to the rest of Loudoun County and the sense that they are not in the mainstream of Loudoun County development.

The Dulles South area was not considered an Urban Growth Area until the adoption of the General Plan. Nonetheless, land purchases by potential developers have consolidated a major portion of the area into several large holdings. Residents and landowners have argued that the area

needs to be developed in order to bring central utilities to existing residents to overcome health risks associated with failing on-site septic systems. These land purchases have raised local assessments and County revenues even though the infrastructure to allow development was not permitted and residents were unable to benefit from increased land values. Subsequently, residents have added the imbalance between taxes and received-services as another reason for a change in County policy to permit new development. (see Base Map, Figure 2, page 4)

The General Plan proposes to permit development rezoning in the area beginning in 1993 and makes adoption of the DSAMP its first implementation priority. The General Plan designates Dulles South as part of the County's planned Urban Growth Area, and suggests that such a decision may have important economic consequences for the County. With over 170 million square feet of business floor area and over 20,000 residential units approved but not yet built, the County faces a potentially serious downward pressure on tax assessments if additional land is made available to the market. Reducing the demand for approved projects may delay the completion of proffered capital facilities and road improvements.

This concern is balanced by the recognized need to address the existing health problems in the Dulles South region. There is also an important infrastructure connection between Dulles North and Dulles South. The extension of utilities from the north will serve to expedite the completion of projects, such as Brambleton, and Route 606 improvements located on the fringe of the Dulles North planning area. Road improvements planned in Dulles South will, similarly, provide a logical extension of the Dulles North road network and will provide the opportunity for additional regional connections.

The purpose of the Dulles South Area Management Plan is to provide a template for new growth if and when the market supports it. The Plan provides a picture of how Dulles South should develop in the future. The ultimate plan for Dulles South is significant since it is based on community beliefs about what is important and what the community should be. This document is the basic framework for future planning and should not change with each election or incremental development decision. The DSAMP policies provide guidance for land use decisions so the County can respond to development proposals. These policies can be amended as new information is available, or to address a change in community attitudes or circumstances, without straying from the basic goals of the plan. Therefore, the Dulles South Area Management Plan is not a static document and can be changed if deemed appropriate. In fact, the Commonwealth of Virginia requires that comprehensive plans be reviewed at least every five years.

Dulles South Planning Area Locational Map

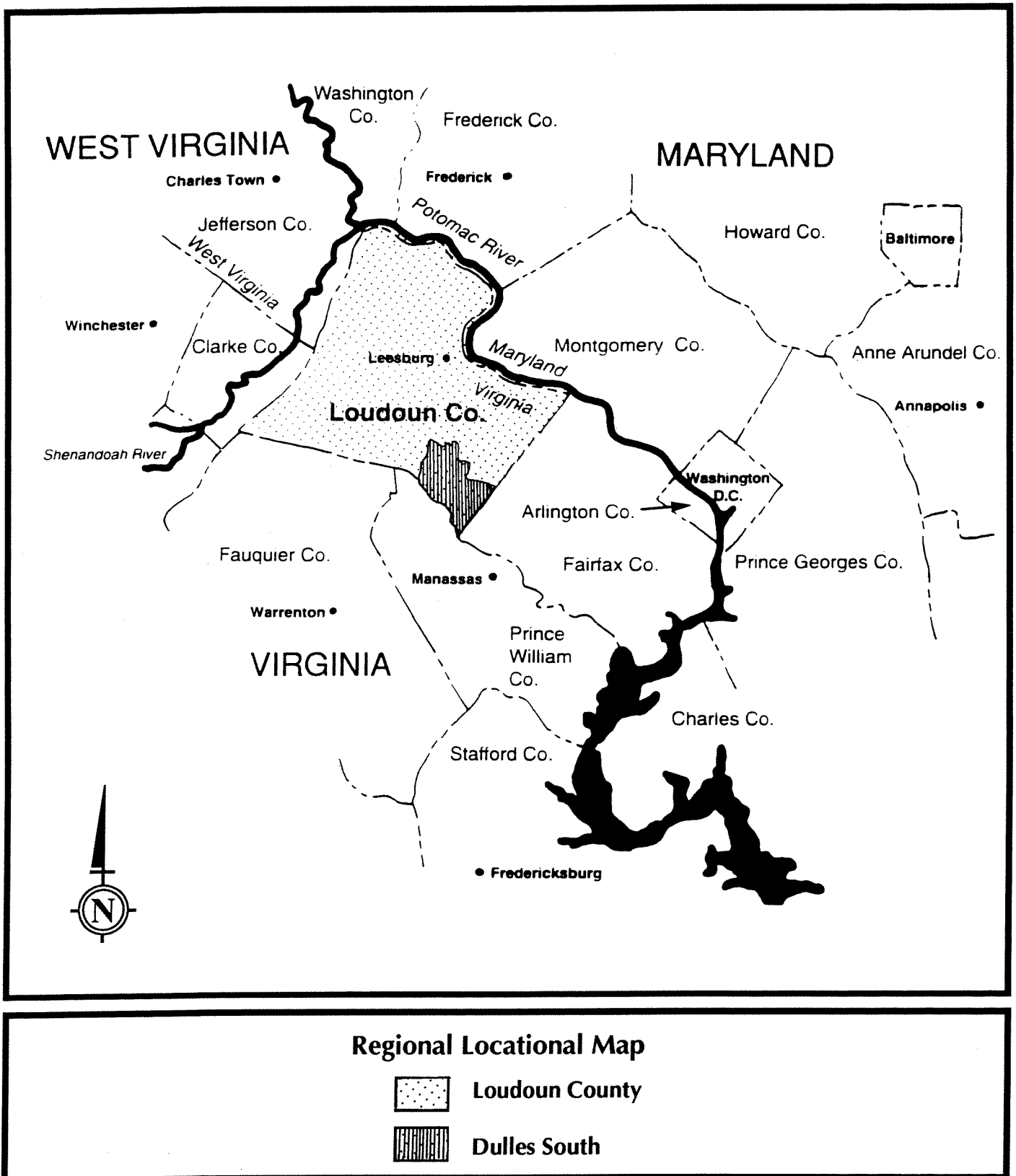
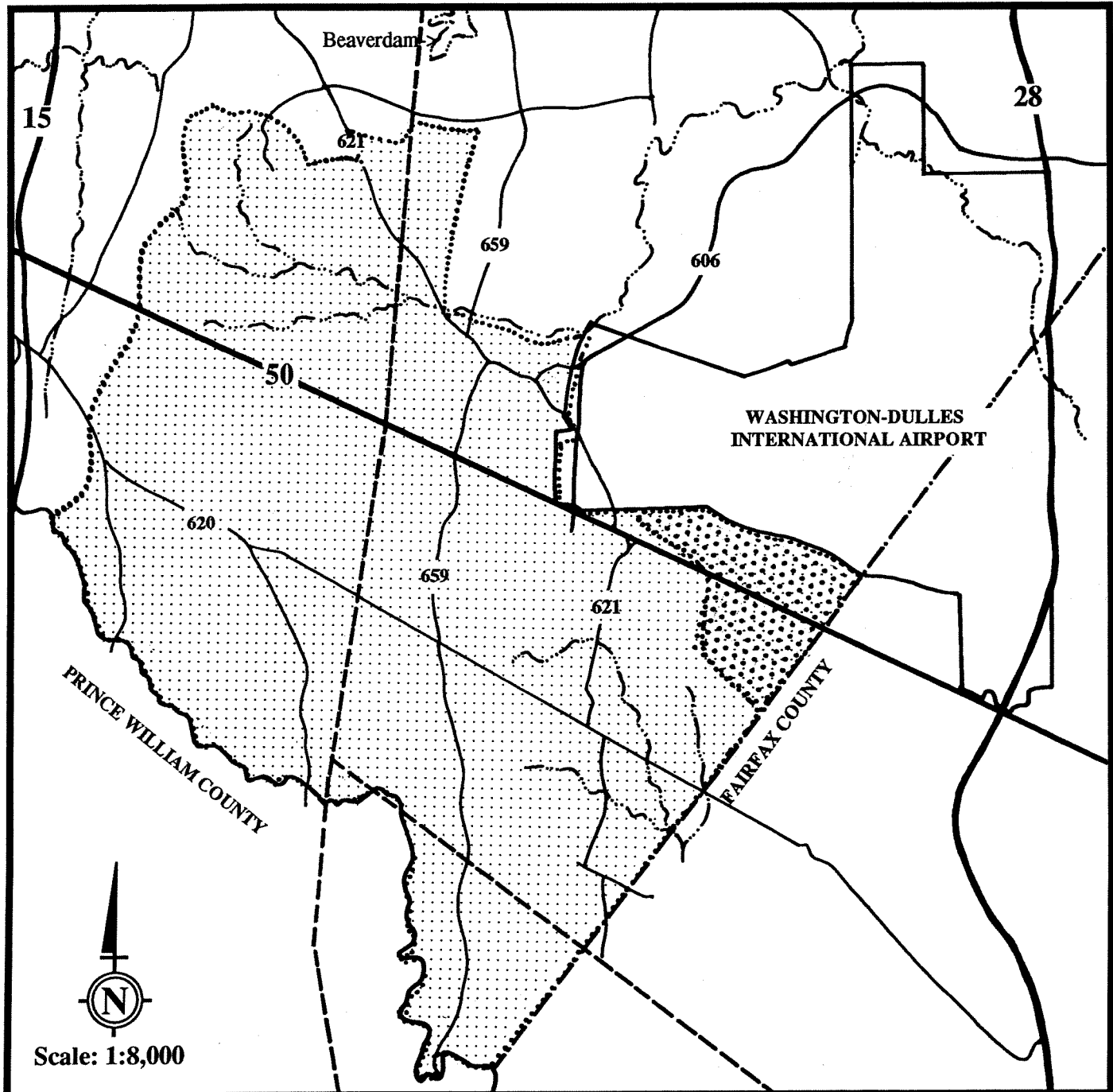


Figure 1.

Dulles South Planning Area Base Map



Dulles South Planning Area

----- Power Line



Cub Run

(The Cub Run Area Management Plan Policies continue to apply to this area.)

Figure 2.

II. Relationship to Other County Planning Documents

The Dulles South Area Management Plan is part of the County's Comprehensive Plan and was adopted by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors in accordance with state enabling legislation (Code of Virginia, Chapter 15.1). The plan is a long-range guide for growth, land use and development decisions in the Dulles South planning area. It is also a guide for other decisions that are related to public investment and will help the County to determine when and where new public facilities and improvements are needed.

The County's Comprehensive Plan consists of several related documents. The Choices and Changes, Loudoun County General Plan serves as the "umbrella" document for the County's planning efforts. The General Plan establishes countywide goals and policies which are the basis for development decisions and for subsequent area plans. Area management plans are specific land use plans for particular areas or communities. They are intended to be an extension of the General Plan but typically have the latitude to refine or change General Plan policy where local circumstances or conditions warrant.

Between 1980 and 1990, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors adopted the Eastern Loudoun Area Management Plan (1980), the Leesburg Area Management Plan (1982), the Rural Land Management Plan (1984), the Dulles North Area Management Plan (1985), the Waterford Area Management Plan (1988), the Cub Run Area Management Plan (1989), and the Round Hill Area Management Plan (1990). It should be noted that the Cub Run Area Management Plan is not superseded by the Dulles South plan.

The Dulles South Area Management Plan (DSAMP) is the first area plan written under the purview of the General Plan. Many of the policies included in the DSAMP reflect General Plan policies. However, the DSAMP does propose new or modified policy directions on several issues. In such cases, the policies and guidelines contained in The Dulles South Area Management Plan will supersede any conflicting policies and/or guidelines contained in the General Plan, except in the Cub Run planning area.

III. Community Planning Process

The Dulles South Area Management Plan was prepared with extensive citizen involvement. The community discussion conducted between March and April 1992, involved citizens early in the process so they could contribute to the fundamental assumptions and direction of the Plan. Community discussions took place in three ways.

In a series of three workshops and a public comment meeting, citizens identified their concerns and priorities for Dulles South. An average of 75 people attended each of the workshops and many attended all three. Over the course of these meetings, planning staff worked with area residents and landowners to identify what people hoped would occur in Dulles South and what they foresaw as the hurdles or opportunities facing them.

The three workshops each had a specific purpose:

Workshop One: Identify what kind of future people want for Dulles South; the Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities in Dulles South that might affect that vision.

Workshop Two : Analyze what current County plans and policies propose for Dulles South and identify needed changes or enhancements; and

Workshop Three: Identify land use scenarios and desirable design features that should be part of new development.

This input preceded any policy development and is recorded in the accompanying document entitled The ***Dulles South Community Report*** (Appendix A, page 73). A public comment meeting followed the publication of the ***Community Report*** to ensure it reflected citizen comments.

In February, 1992, the Board of Supervisors appointed a 15 member Citizens' Committee and charged it with preparing the first draft of a Dulles South Area Management Plan. In addition to two area residents and an area business owner, the Committee consisted of people from the County with expertise and interests in finance, real estate and development, the environment, law and public facilities. The Citizens' Committee met weekly from February through November 1992, to analyze information from area residents, landowners, and technical sources and to write the actual plan policy. The Citizens' Committee forwarded the Plan to the Planning Commission in December 1992, after two public review meetings. The formal review process before the County Planning Commission consisted of a public hearing, and numerous work sessions before certification of the plan to the Board of Supervisors on May 5, 1993.

Following a Board public hearing in June 1993, the Land Use Committee of the Board of Supervisors reviewed the draft plan to address final public comment and outstanding issues. The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on August 4, 1993 to approve the plan.